efforts with like-minded developing countries, including in the G-20 alliance on agriculture and the G- 33 alliance on Special Products. This has ensured, *inter alia*, that the elements and principles incorporated in the agreed framework on agriculture will lead to substantial reductions in trade-distorting domestic subsidies provided to their farm sector largely by the developed countries, a credible end date for elimination of their export subsidies, and substantial market access improvements for products of export interest to developing countries. Moreover, consistent with the Doha mandate to negotiate on agriculture, any additional commitments, particularly in market access, by developing countries like India should serve to safeguard their food and livelihood security concerns and rural development needs. A new Special Safeguard Mechanism will also be instituted for use of developing countries to deal with any import surge. The Framework for Establishing Modalities in Agriculture was adopted by consensus by all developed and developing country Members.

WTO talks on agriculture

1186. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the prospects of agreement on agriculture at the WTO appear bleak looking at the wide gap in the views of the developing countries and the developed countries;

(b) the reasons for not sending Indian representative to the Mini-Ministerial Conference held at London recently; and

(c) the measures Government are taking to muster more and more support for India so as to reach on agreement which helps India and its farming community?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (c) In the on-going negotiations on the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Agriculture, India has built alliances with like-minded countries, including the G-20 on agriculture and the G-33 on Special Products, in order to ensure, *inter alia*, that trade-distorting domestic subsidies

provided to their farm sector largely by the developed countries are substantially reduced, their export subsidies eliminated, and market access opportunities for products of export interest to developing countries like India improve substantially. Moreover, consistent with the Doha mandate to negotiate on agriculture, any additional commitments, particularly in market access, by developing countries like India should serve to safeguard their food and livelihood security concerns and rural development needs. On 1st August, 2004, a *Framework for Establishing Modalities in Agriculture* has been agreed to by consensus in the meeting of the General Council of the WTO. The Framework duly addresses India's concerns.

At the London Mini-Ministerial meeting, India was represented by the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of India to WTO.

Trade between India and Mercosur

1187. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently India and Mercosur entered into an agreement to increase the trade between the two;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the items that can be exported to Mercosur; and

(d) the present trade between the two in terms of dollars?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) Yes, Sir. India and Mercosur have entered into a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) on January 25, 2004.

(b) The PTA aims at expansion of bilateral trade by granting fixed tariff preferences to certain products as a first step towards the creation of a Free Trade Area between Mercosur and India. All the five annexes to the PTA, namely the two lists of products on which fixed tariff preferences are to be given, the texts on Rules of Origin, Safeguard Measures and Dispute Settlement are being negotiated at present.

(c) The products which can be exported to the Mercosur at reduced tariff are being negotiated at present.